

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-05 AID-05 /102 W

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R 270730Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7095

INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

CINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 2170

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, AG, FR, SS

SUBJ: ALGERIAN-FRENCH RELATIONS: BUSINESS AS USUAL

1. DESPITE IMPASSE ON SIX FRENCH CITIZENS APPARENTLY HELD BY POLISARIO SINCE RAID ON SOUERATT IN MAURITANIA MAY 1, ALGERIANS AND FRENCH HAVE MAINTAINED FAIR SEMBLANCE OF NORMAL RELATIONSHIP. DURING JULY, QUAI D'ORSAY ECONOMIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR FROMENT-MEURICE VISITED ALGIERS FOR TALKS ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE, IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER, ALGERIAN FORMIN POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR GENERAL ABDELMADJID ADJALI VISITED PARIS FOR TALKS ON POLITICAL SUBJECTS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT QUAI SECYGEN SOUTOU RECEIVED HIM.

2. OTHER DIVERSE SIGNS OF NORMAL RELATIONS WERE AUG 3 VISIT OF FRENCH P & T SECSTATE SEGARD TO SIGN ALGIERS-MARSEILLE TELEPHONE CABLE AGREEMENT, SIGNATURE OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN FRENCH PETROLEUM COMPANY AND SONATRACH FOR SUPPLY OF ALGERIAN CONDENSATE TO FRANCE, AND HIGH ALGERIAN ATTENDANCE AT FRENCH EMBASSY'S JULY 14 RECEPTION.  
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3. HOWEVER, ALTHOUGH EVERYDAY RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES GO ON, STRAIN CONTINUES TO SHOW, AND SIX PRISONERS OF POLISARIO ARE AT MOMENT MAJOR IRRITANT IN RELATIONSHIP. FRENCH EMBASSY TELLS US THAT SOUTOU POINTED OUT STRONGLY TO ADJALI IMPOSSIBILITY OF ANY NEW DEPARTURES IN ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES AS LONG AS SIX NOT RELEASED. FOR THEIR PART, ALGERIANS SUMMONED FRENCH

CHARGE IN MIDDLE OF NIGHT AUGUST 10-11 TO DEMAND EXPLANATION OF PARIS REUTERS' REPORT SUGGESTING THAT GOF BELIEVED PRISONERS WERE BEING HELD BY POLISARIO IN ALGERIA. CHARGE DENIED THIS REPORT, ALTHOUGH FRENCH TELL US IN CONFIDENCE THAT THEY ARE QUITE SURE PRISONERS ARE IN ALGERIA. IMPASSE ON PRISONER ISSUE REMAINS TOTAL WITH FRENCH REFUSING TO TALK TO POLISARIO AS ALGERIANS WISH AND POLISARIO DEMANDING ACCOUNTING FOR ALL POLISARIO PRISONERS OF MAURITANIANS AND WITHDRAWAL OF MAURITANIAN FORCES FROM SAHARA.

4. THERE ARE OTHER TENSIONS AS WELL. IN COURSE OF A MID-JULY AFRICAN TRIP, FRENCH FORMIN DE GUIRINGAUD STOPPED OFF AT ALGIERS AIRPORT IN ORDER TO MEET WITH BOUTEFLIKA. BOUTEFLIKA ARRIVED AT AIRPORT AT APPOINTED TIME ONLY TO FIND THAT, BECAUSE OF FRENCH FAILURE TO CONVERT FROM GMT TO LOCAL TIME CORRECTLY, GUIRINGAUD'S PLANE WOULD ARRIVE TWO HOURS LATE. BOUTEFLIKA LEFT AIRPORT, AND GUIRINGAUD HAD TO SETTLE FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH FON MINISTRY'S FRENCH AFFAIRS DIRECTOR.

5. INCIDENTS INVOLVING ALGERIANS IN FRANCE ALSO COMPLICATE RELATIONSHIP. LATEST IN SERIES IS MURDER OF ALGERIAN WORKER IN MARSEILLE, AN ACT WHICH PRESS HERE HAS DENOUNCED AS WORK OF "COMMANDOS OF RACISM."

6. COMMENT: ALGERIAN-FRENCH RELATIONSHIP WILL LIKELY CONTINUE BESET WITH PROBLEMS. OUR FRENCH EMBASSY COLLEAGUES HERE, WHILE PROFESSING TO SEE NO PROGRESS IN CASE OF SIX PRISONERS, BELIEVE THAT

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PROBLEM WILL SOMEHOW BE RESOLVED AND THAT THERE WILL BE ANOTHER TO REPLACE IT. COLONIAL RELATIONSHIP FOSTERED TENSIONS, AND ALGERIAN EMIGRANT POPULATION IN FRANCE ASSURES THERE PERPETUATION.

7. DESPITE PERIOD DIFFICULTIES, HOWEVER, FRENCH PENETRATION OF ALGERIAN CULTURE SO EXTENSIVE AS TO PUT A LIMIT ON DEGREE TO WHICH ALGERIA COULD TURN AWAY FROM FORMER METROPOLE. AS THOUGHTFUL ALGERIANS NOTE, THIS COUNTRY IS NORTHWARD ORIENTED, AND MIGRATIONS OF ALGERIAN VACATIONING POPULATIONS BACK AND FORTH DURING SUMMER SEASON BEAR WITNESS TO THIS POINT. PROXIMITY OF TWO COUNTRIES STRENGTHENS LOVE SIDE OF LOVE-HATE RELATIONSHIP WHICH OFTEN PREVAILS BETWEEN EX-COLONIZERS AND THEIR FORMER SUBJECTS. CULTURAL AFFINITY ALONE WOULD SEEM TO ASSURE THAT FRENCH CONNECTION WILL REMAIN PREDOMINANT IN ALGERIA'S FOREIGN ORIENTATION FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE. HAYNES

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## Message Attributes

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